



Plainville Board of Education's

# Community Letter

Spring 2018

Plainville Community Schools inspire and prepare lifelong learners to follow their passion, engage in their communities, and positively impact our global society.

## Message from the Board of Education

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[www.plainvilleschools.org](http://www.plainvilleschools.org)

As towns around Connecticut begin to vote on their municipal and school budgets, we would like the citizens of Plainville to remember that our public schools are the best choice for their children.

### ***Our schools provide:***

- A network of support to ensure that each child gets the instruction and attention they need to thrive in school and life
- Committed and well-trained teachers who know how to help each child excel at every level
- Diversity that provides a variety of experiences that are important for rich and successful lives--different people, cultures, sports and extracurricular activities
- A charitable environment that shows our children how to give back to their communities
- Enriched curriculum and up-to-date technology that goes beyond the standard learning to help teachers create well-rounded students that will have the proper skills needed for the 21st century

Public education is a valuable resource that needs to be supported by the whole community to make sure that our children are fully prepared for college, career and life. For additional information about the Plainville Community Schools you can contact the Board of Education or the Superintendent at the Plainville Community Schools website: [www.plainvilleschools.org](http://www.plainvilleschools.org)

## Student Spotlight: Plainville High School

This year I became a member of the Connecticut State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE), which is a group of selected students from around the state that are tasked with researching and developing a solution to various problems that are impacting education. Currently, the three problems we have been presented with are the summer slide, the school breakfast program, and encouraging more students to choose teaching as a profession.

As a member of SSACE, I am working on the school breakfast committee to improve statewide participation in the school breakfast program since the state ranks 47th in the nation. Through our research, we have discovered that participation is greatly increased when it is offered longer than standard times, which is most effectively implemented through legislation. We are currently compiling our research to create a report that will be presented to the Connecticut State Board of Education in June.

Being a SSACE representative has allowed me to apply my leadership and research skills in order to work with others and develop a plan for executing change statewide. More importantly, the knowledge I have gained from my incredibly diverse peers has been an exceptional learning opportunity for me that I highly value.



*Abigail Leander  
Grade 12  
Plainville High School  
SSACE Member*

## Read Across America

Students and staff across Plainville Community Schools celebrated Read Across America, a national reading and motivational awareness program that commemorates Dr. Seuss' (Theodor Seuss Geisel) birthday on March 2. A number of guest readers visited schools to share books and reading with students.



*MSP Library Information Teacher Joyce Lynch shares a book with Middle School students.*



*Assistant Superintendent of Schools Steven LePage reads to students in Cynthia Giantonio's third grade class at Wheeler School*

## Let's Chat With...Kathy Wells, Plainville Board of Education



**Why did you want to become a Plainville BOE member?** I was asked and after a bit of thought, I said yes. I have always wanted to participate in making the world a better place. I have felt this way for as long as I can remember. This is a way I can do that. I can stay in my own little world and talk

about it or I can stand up and do something. I have been given the opportunity to **do** something.

**What is your top priority as a Board member?** My top priority as a board member is to listen. I feel that my number one function is to hear people's concerns, ideas, and hopes and to do my best to see that all the powers that be hear them and act on them.

**What have you enjoyed most about being a Board member so far?** The thing I have enjoyed most about becoming a Board member is the people I have met. If you watch the news or bury your head in Facebook too much, you will become very cynical and negative. The people I

have met affirmed my faith that people are really good. They do care. Everyone is really trying to do what is best and what is fair while thinking about everyone's concerns and values. Not an easy task.

**What is the biggest challenge facing public education today?** The biggest challenge facing public education today is funding, technology, and poverty. That is the short answer and it is not one challenge but many challenges. We all understand the funding piece. Technology is a double-edged sword. It's needed. It can be such an asset and it can create problems we never dreamed of! Education creates those boot straps that people can hold onto, to get themselves out of the vicious cycle of poverty, but it also prevents people from getting an education.

**What do you feel will be your greatest contribution to the Board of Education?** My greatest contribution to the BOE is my distinct privilege to come from a diverse family. Not a single day goes by that I do not learn and better myself in regards to my bias. This perspective can be a great asset to our Board of Education.



The New Britain Museum of American Art hosted an exhibit of creative artworks from the students of Plainville Community Schools. Two hundred students in grades K-12 had artwork on display at the museum from April 3- April 8. An opening reception was held on April 3rd. This event was made possible by the financial support of the Elizabeth Norton Trust Fund and the Plainville Community Fund at the Main Street Community Foundation.

**Pictured L-R:** Plainville student artists-- Nolan Meehan, Jose Arroyo, and Mariah Carey



## Good News! Great things are happening in our school district.

### LINDEN STREET SCHOOL

World famous children's author Patricia Polacco recently spent the day at Linden thanks to a grant written by **Linden Library Media Specialist, Alyssa Lombardo**. Ms. Polacco spoke to students about the importance of kindness and integrity...**the Linden school community** spread inspiration through their March Madness initiative celebrating being grateful and doing kind things for each other. Efforts included their Wall of WOW featuring post it notes that depict positives and "I am grateful for" statements, faculty and staff members sent positive notes to parents and family members, and Linden students and staff shared acts of kindness...**Linden** held their annual "Kidathlon" on February 23rd, turning hallways into a healthy, fun obstacle course. Participants were cheered on by family members and staff!

### LOUIS TOFFOLON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**The Toffolon school community** participated in their "2nd Annual Souper Bowl" from January 30 – February 2. Students, families, and staff together donated approximately 700 hundred items for the Plainville Community Food Pantry...

**The Toffolon School community** celebrated "Music in our Schools" Week by inviting family members of kindergarten, first and second grade students to join the students in their music classes...**The Toffolon PTO** brought the exciting multimedia program "The Science of Sound" featuring Caryn Lin to Toffolon. Caryn transformed sound through the use of her five string electric violin and a myriad of modern technologies that took students from the classical days of Bach to today's techno-wonders. Students were introduced to the many scientific concepts involved in the creation of live music and were able to see S.T.E.A.M. at work in the real world.

### FRANK T. WHEELER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**Fourth grade students at Wheeler** have been involved in creating inventions that will solve a real life problem. To create their inventions, the students followed a process of brainstorming, drawing plans, gathering materials, building, and testing their inventions. They showcased their novel ideas in a school wide Invention Convention held on March 6th at Wheeler...**Students in kindergarten through grade 5** participated in art lessons based on famous African Americans, African American history, and African culture in honor of Black History Month during the month of February.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE

**The Middle School's Library** sponsored a Read-A-Thon with 45 students participating. The students read 191 books and raised \$536 to jointly benefit the Connecticut Children's Medical Center's Hematology and Oncology Department and Yale New Haven Hospital's Closer to Free...Plainville resident and dog sled runner, Joan Kaczmarczyk, visited the Middle School on March 26th to speak with **sixth graders** about the care and training of sled dogs and the sport of sled racing. Her presentation included an explanation of the features of the dog sled, and a 'meet and greet' with her six Alaskan Huskies...**MSP** celebrated Rare Disease Awareness Day by

supporting the Glut1 Deficiency Foundation in honor of **7th grade student, Braden Shumbo**. Braden kicked off the event by creating a report to educate the Middle School community about Glut1 Deficiency. Donations were collected from staff and Love Some1 With Glut1 bracelets were sold. A total of \$640 was raised, which was donated to Braden's Love Some1 with Glut1 fundraising page on the Glut1 Deficiency Foundation website...**The MSP Student Council** held their third annual food drive at Walmart in Bristol on March 30th netting over 1,000 pounds of food supplies in one day for the Plainville Community Food Pantry.

### PLAINVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

**27 PHS students**, together with **Business teachers Brian Edge and Vira Boatright**, attended a Financial Reality Fair sponsored by Connecticut Credit Unions and held at Central Connecticut State University...**PHS students in faculty members Mark Chase and David Gaignard's STEM and Engineering classes** participated in the annual SEAPERCH competition hosted at Central Connecticut State University. A SEAPERCH is a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) designed to travel under water and complete a variety of different challenges like retrieving rings or cubes at the bottom of the pool and completing an obstacle course in the shortest amount of time...**The PHS Digital Devils FIRST Robotics Team** competed at Wilby High School where they were picked by two other teams to compete in the playoff matches. Although faced with mechanical break downs and programming difficulties, the Digital Devils pulled away with a championship victory...**The PHS Jazz Band** participated in the Berklee College of Music's Annual High School Jazz Festival. The PHS group competed against 16 other bands from New England, New York, Pennsylvania and Chicago, finishing in third place out of the 16 groups in their competition class. This was the best finish to date for the PHS Jazz Band in this annual competition.

### DISTRICT

Elementary school students in Plainville experienced an a capella concert by Backtrack Vocals on March 15th, thanks to a grant from the Elizabeth Norton Trust Fund. **Linden Street School music teacher, Marilyn Speranza** utilized the grant to bring Backtrack Vocals to all three Plainville elementary schools...In celebration of "Board of Education Appreciation Month" the **Plainville Community Schools' Elementary Honors Choir** performed at the March 12th Plainville Board of Education meeting...**Middle School of Plainville faculty member Stephanie Gagne and Plainville High School volunteer tutor Tom Arcari** were recognized as the district's Everyday Heroes for the month of February and **Plainville Community Schools District Maintainers Alex North and Terry Archer, together with Linda Paoletto** from Cortina Tile, were recognized as the district's Everyday Heroes for the month of March...**The Plainville Elementary Town-Wide Jazz Band** performed at the XL Center in Hartford, CT before a Hartford Wolf Pack game.

# Plainville Adult and Continuing Education: A Community Event

Plainville Adult and Continuing Education received a grant award from the Elizabeth H. Norton Trust that supported, "Pizza, a Mini-Series, and a History Lesson." Participants watched "Band of Brothers" on the big screen at the Plainville Public Library. Mr. Akram Atallah, owner of Domino's Pizza, 46 East Street in Plainville, provided free pizza, beverages, and paper goods each week.

Pictured at the right is the program Instructor, Mrs. Midge Bresnahan with Mr. Cesar Lopez, who faithfully delivered the free Domino's lunch every Saturday in March.

Mr. Frederick Kennedy attended the program and shared a picture of his brother Thomas, who bravely served in World War II. Midge Bresnahan is shown at right, displaying the treasured photograph to the group.



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Twitter account via our handle:  
**@PlvComSchools**

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## Belief Statements... We believe:

- Our public school system is the core of the community and has a fundamental responsibility to develop productive, educated citizens in a democratic society
- Optimal achievement for each learner is a responsibility shared by students, home, school, and community
- We must provide each student with a comprehensive curriculum and effective instruction to ensure meaningful engagement in the learning process
- A safe, caring learning environment promotes the academic growth, health, and emotional well-being of each student
- Communication and collaboration serve to increase knowledge, trust, and respect, and are the responsibility of everyone in the community
- Professional Learning Communities foster teamwork that results in the continuous improvement of teaching and learning outcomes